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Recruitment Policy and Certain Security
Procedures of the KPÖe

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SOURCE

1. The Austrian Communist Party (KPÖe) recruitment policy is to enlist members steadily on an individual basis rather than to build up the Party rolls through large-scale recruitment campaigns. KPÖe members, however, are continually urged to seek new members. Although official Party policy states that quality and not quantity should be emphasized in recruiting new members, in practice the Party does not refuse those candidates who are joining the KPÖe only to keep their jobs and who will actually do little or no work for it.
2. The possibility that his presence in the Party might provide material for Socialist propaganda is practically the only reason for rejecting a candidate for KPÖe membership. Former Nazi activity will not keep a person out of the Party unless that person is still resident in the same place or working in the same factory in which he was an active Nazi. A candidate's criminal record is overlooked unless it is well known in his neighborhood and would reflect to the disadvantage of the Party. If a person has a black mark on his record, he should probably not conceal the fact when applying for Party membership as its subsequent discovery could mean dismissal from the Party. Deceiving the Party is considered the most serious error a member can make.
3. A prospective member is usually sponsored by a member of the Party. Although the sponsor is not held responsible for the recruit, he is expected to have held several political discussions with him.
4. No security check is made on new members joining the KPÖe. No personal history statement is filled out, and there is neither an investigation of files nor a check of the applicant's neighborhood. Other Party members who might know the new recruit are queried. There is still no investigation when a person becomes a functionary in his neighborhood organization (Wohnsektion) or the lowest factory level. Because the Party is so anxious to have anyone who will do well the job assigned to him. Above this level, however, investigations become progressively more thorough. Before a member attends the 14-day school or accepts even a low position in a factory-level (Betrieb) leadership, a personal history statement must be submitted. Before a KPÖe member attends the five-week school and before he is advanced to a top factory-level position, a neighborhood investigation is probably made at his previous residence. The neighborhood check, as well as various file checks, become more thorough before an advancement to a district (Bezirk) position or prior to attending the

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... six-months school.

5. Secret recruitment into the Party is relatively common. Most common reason for secret membership is strong parental opposition. Occasionally secret membership is suggested by the Party to recruits who might be used to penetrate the Austrian Socialist Party (SPÖ) or take active part in Communist front organizations. When the chance to recruit a member of the SPÖ arises, however, the Party usually considers that the propaganda advantage of the SPÖ recruitment outweighs the advantages to be gained through penetration of the SPÖ.
6. In some cases, membership is kept secret only at one's residence and, in such instances, Party publications and correspondence are delivered to the individual at the factory. It is also possible to keep KPÖ membership secret in the factory, in which case it is known only to the factory leadership (Betriebsleitung) and the KPÖ neighborhood leadership (Wohnsektionleitung). In the latter case, the secret membership would probably be established to permit front-organization work or penetration of the SPÖ; secret membership at one's residence is most frequently used in cases of parental opposition.

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Comment. By "active" is meant Wollenleiter of the NSDAP and above.

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